

ASAP

ASYLUM
SUPPORT
APPEALS
PROJECT

DEFENDING ASYLUM SEEKERS

LEGAL RIGHTS TO FOOD AND SHELTER

JOB INFORMATION PACK

Duty Scheme Support Officer

Post:	Duty Scheme Support Officer
Responsible To:	Duty Scheme Co-ordinator
Salary and benefits:	£33,938.46 starting salary, including inner London weighting. 6% employer pension contribution, season ticket loan and other benefits
Location:	East London, E14. Hybrid office/home working with minimum 2 days per week in the office
Status:	Permanent contract after 6 month probation period
Hours:	35 hours per week (excluding lunch break) 9 – 9.30am start time
Leave:	30 days per annum pro rata plus bank holidays

About ASAP

The Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP) is a small national charity which was set up in 2003 to reduce the destitution of asylum-seekers by protecting their legal rights to food and shelter. We have a team of 12 permanent staff members and around 45 volunteer solicitors and barristers. We are based in East London but have a hybrid working model which allows remote working alongside a minimum of 2 days per week spent in the office.

ASAP delivers three strands of work

- Through our Duty Scheme, we offer free, high-quality legal representation and advice to people seeking asylum, and people who have been refused asylum, who are appealing against a Home Office decision to refuse or discontinue their housing, financial support, or both.
- We provide asylum support advice and training to hundreds of frontline organisations, advice agencies and legal practitioners working with people seeking asylum each year. We operate an advice line and online forum (Asylum Support Advice Network) for over 1000 members.
- We use our strong evidence base to improve policies and procedures on asylum support through policy work and strategic litigation.

Alongside this, we run a women’s project, to ensure we offer a gender sensitive service to destitute women in the asylum system, to train women’s organisations in asylum support law, and to progress policy work for women seeking asylum, currently focused on access to support for those experiencing domestic abuse.

ASAP is recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the London Legal Support Trust. ASAP was highly commended in the 2019 Law Works Annual Pro Bono Awards for Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership and won the Andy Ludlow 2015 London Homelessness Award.

Our vision

All people seeking asylum in the UK have shelter, food and support rather than living in destitution.

The Home Office and Asylum Support Tribunal are held to account, to ensure access to justice, dignity and equality for the people we serve.

Our key goals

Goal 1. Increasing quality representation and dignity at the Asylum Support Tribunal for all people seeking asylum.

Goal 2. Building the asylum support skills of other organisations to ensure people seeking asylum across the UK have access to quality advice and information about their legal rights to food and shelter.

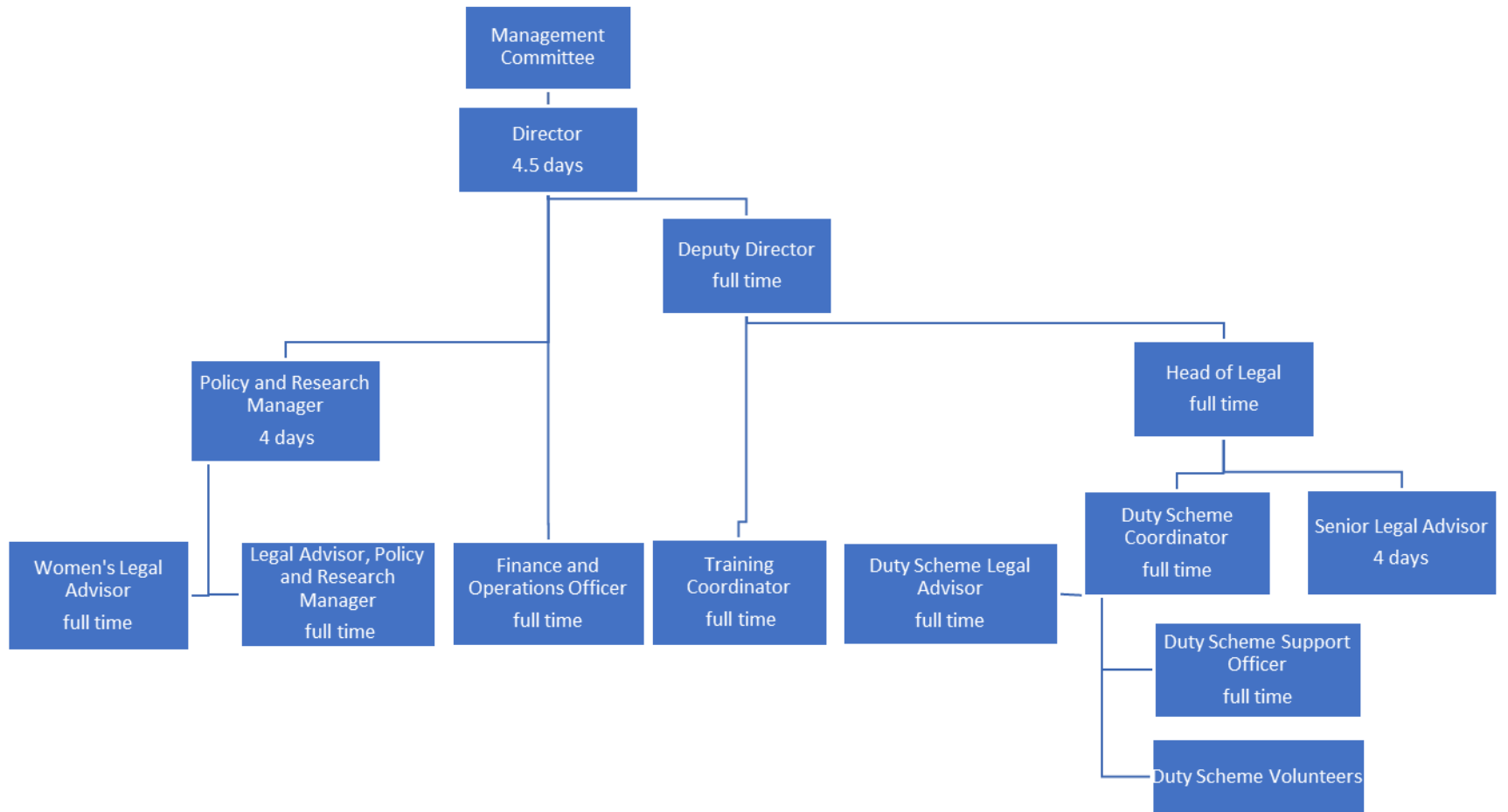
Goal 3. Tackling the root causes of destitution through policy, lobbying and litigation.

Goal 4. Maintaining a well-resourced and purposeful organisation to assist people seeking asylum and the organisations supporting them.

You can find out more detail about our strategic plan here:

[ASAP strategic plan 2019-24 A4.pdf \(asaproject.org\)](#)

ASAP Organogram Sept 2024



About the role

The Duty Scheme Support Officer performs a vital role supporting the smooth running of ASAP's duty scheme representation service at the First-tier Tribunal (Asylum Support) (AST). You will work closely with the duty scheme team, especially the Duty Scheme Co-ordinator and Duty Scheme Legal Advisor, to provide efficient and time-sensitive administrative support to the scheme. You will be the first point of contact for our duty scheme, having daily direct contact with referring agencies, self-referring clients, the AST admin team, ASAP staff, duty scheme advocates (DSAs) and the Home Office.

Main duties and responsibilities:

Core administrative tasks

1. Provide administrative support to DSAs ensuring they have access to appeal bundles and all relevant appeal documents that have been sent to ASAP in advance of a hearing.
2. Process incoming referrals (via phone and our email referral inbox) and, if necessary, proactively seek referrals to the duty scheme, including liaising with referring agencies and clients who self-refer.
3. Daily data base entry and filing of client documents to a high standard of accuracy, including making sure that all relevant ASAP appeal paperwork has been completed.
4. Process appeal decisions and written Statements of Reasons (appeal judgements) and forward these to DSAs.
5. Archive client files according to ASAP's archiving policy.
6. Ensure that all handling of client information is done with respect for client confidentiality and in line with ASAP's data protection policies.
7. Ensure that DSAs sign up to the quarterly duty scheme rota by sending out the rota in a timely manner and ensuring coverage of rota days.
8. Maintain ASAP's office at the AST including making sure the office is well equipped with all essential stationery, updating wall notices for DSAs, ordering and taking delivery of basic emergency food supplies and generally ensuring the office is well ordered and tidy.
9. Assist with administrative tasks related to the recruitment, training, induction and assessments of new DSAs.

Communication/ co-ordination with stakeholders

10. Liaise with referral agencies, clients, the AST and the Home Office as necessary in the run up to hearings to ensure that ASAP has received relevant documentation and information relating to individual hearings.
11. Maintain ongoing communication with the AST admin team as required (e.g. to send updated lists of ASAP DSAs) ensuring a positive and effective working relationship with the team.
12. Provide a detailed explanation of AST appeal procedures, ASAP's referral procedures, and how our Duty Scheme operates, to referring agencies and self-referring clients as necessary.
13. Signpost self-referring clients and referring agencies to appropriate forms of support in addition to and/or instead of ASAP's services. For example, signpost to ASAP's advice line or website materials.

Other

14. Take minutes at the weekly duty scheme operational meetings.
15. With assistance from the Director, organise and promote ASAP's involvement in the annual London Legal Walk fundraiser.
16. Assist with the administrative running of ASAP's conference.
17. If workload allows, support ASAP with its social media communication.
18. Assist with training and supporting ASAP office volunteers if required.

General

19. Attend regular support and supervision sessions with the Duty Scheme Coordinator, and professional development training as required.
20. Attend and actively participate in team meetings, DSA update training and ASAP events.
21. Ensure that all work carried out is in the best interests of asylum-seekers and refugees and in accordance with ASAP's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.
22. Be available to work occasional evenings and weekends (for which Time Off in Lieu will be given).
23. Uphold the ethos and protect the good name of ASAP, working in line with ASAP policies and procedures.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Skills, Experience and Knowledge	<p>Experience of administration including filing, archiving and data base entry</p> <p>Comfortable with IT, with ability to use Microsoft 365 programmes, especially Excel, and to quickly pick up new IT software as required</p> <p>Experience of effectively communicating by email and over the phone with a range of audiences/ stakeholders</p> <p>A commitment to asylum/ human rights/social justice issues</p> <p>Demonstrable commitment to confidentiality and data protection principles</p>	<p>Knowledge and/or experience of asylum support appeals</p> <p>Experience of supporting volunteers</p> <p>Understanding of the pressures affecting services giving destitution advice</p> <p>Experience of communicating with people from different cultures, who are in challenging circumstances, including those whose first language is not English</p> <p>Direct experience of the asylum system in the UK</p>
General Work Skills	<p>Demonstrable ability to work in a small team in a cooperative, flexible and supportive manner</p> <p>Excellent attention to detail</p> <p>Ability to manage own time by prioritising tasks and meeting competing deadlines</p> <p>Ability to complete tasks to a high standard</p>	
Working Arrangements	<p>Willingness and ability to very occasionally work outside office core hours</p>	
Equal Opportunities	<p>Understanding, awareness of and commitment to the principles and practice of equal opportunities and diversity</p>	
<p>A pre-existing right to work in the UK is required.</p>		

Application Process

ASAP is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from individuals regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation. We positively encourage applicants with lived experience of seeking asylum and/or asylum support. You do not have to tell us about your experiences as part of the recruitment process if you do not want to but it would be helpful to know if you have been through the asylum process in the UK.

To apply, please complete the application form and equality and diversity monitoring forms on our website and send them to:

Lilly Barritt, Duty Scheme Co-ordinator: lilly@asaproject.org.uk.

Please quote “**Job Ref: ASAP Duty Scheme Support Officer CONFIDENTIAL.**” in the subject of your email.

Experts by experience

If you are an expert by experience (a refugee or a migrant with direct, first-hand experience of issues and challenges of the UK asylum or immigration system), you can ask for independent and confidential support for your job application from the Experts by Experience Employment Network (www.ebeemployment.org.uk). Please complete [this form](#) to request support and they will confirm if they can match you with a mentor to support your application.

The deadline for applications is 11.59 pm on Sunday 6th October 2024

Interviews will be held on Monday 14th October

Interviews will be held in person at our office in East London. We will consider requests to attend remotely if necessary, but our strong preference is for candidates to attend in person if at all possible.

Further information about the interview process will be provided to short-listed applicants. Interviews will consist of a practical test of your abilities relating to the role and a standard interview with a panel of up to three people.

Please let us know in advance of your interview if you have a disability and require reasonable adjustments for the interview and/or assessment process to ensure the process is fair and equitable to all applicants.

ASAP keeps assessment records/notes for all applicants, whether shortlisted or not, for 12 months. They are stored securely and then destroyed securely after the above period. All short-listed candidates will be notified of their selection decision and can obtain feedback from the assessment if they request it.